4 Properties of Lighting: These are the 4 controllable properties of light. These 4 properties are what you should consider when making any decision about what and how you want something to look like from a lighting perspective.

1. Distribution
    a. The direction (where the light is physically coming from)
    b. The shape (where the light falls on the stage. Ex: cutting light off of objects you don't want lit, pin spot on an actor center stage)
    c. The size (how much of an area the light covers)
    d. The quality (if the light is sharp or fuzzy, if it has a gobo or not)
2. Color
    a. The presence or absence of color in the lights and the interaction of all of these colors
3. Intensity
    a. How bright or dim the light is on stage
4. Movement
    a. The change of intensity (either brighter or darker), the changing of focus (taking lights down in one area and bringing them up in another), or the physical moving of a light via a moving head/mirror fixture.

1. Basics of Design Process
    a. Read play 3 times
        a.i. Once for material, twice for specifics, thrice for anything missed
    b. Find artistic direction
        b.i. This is usually given by the director (ex: steampunk Shakespeare)
    c. Collaboration time!
        c.i. This is where you meet with your other designers/director to form a unified design.
    d. Research time!
        d.i. Once everyone has agreed on a direction, now is the time to create your design statement and bring in photos that best describe the general feelings you are going for.
    e. Lighting Key
        e.i. The first piece of paperwork you should create. The basis of everything that comes after.
    f. Rough Plot
        f.i. This is your first draft to make sure your ideas on are par with everyone in the physical space
    g. Final Plot
        g.i. Once all other areas are finalized (sets, costumes, props) and nothing conflicts with your rough plot, you can finalize everything.
    h. Paperwork

h.i. All the information that is generated after your final plot is approved.

h.i.1. Magic Sheet

h.i.2. Channel Hook-up

h.i.3. Cue Sheet

1. Show Selection
    a. Try not to pic a show that's 200 pages long. Something that's easy to explain to a judge makes for more time talking about lighting looks and less time explaining the show.
    b. Along those same lines, it's much easier to read a 50 page play three times than it is a 300 page cycle.
    c. Try to stay away from musicals. They seem like they'd be more designer friendly but there's a lot to do in a musical and it's a dangerous place to start for the inexperienced. I would expect lots of colors, lots of looks, lots of cues. I've done shows where a single song had 50+ cues, so the bar is higher.
    d. You can't always force them to read it, but most scripts give you all the lighting information you need in the text.
2. Direction
    a. The purpose of this is to come up with a design direction that the show will take. The only time you need to spend any real time explaining this is if you do something outside the intended realm of the script (ex: *Our Town* set on the moon).
    b. There are several ways to do this
        b.i. Coach plays director.
        b.ii. Designer plays director.
        b.iii. Create a design team made up of students doing other fields of the competition. IE, pairing up someone doing scenic, lighting, costumes, PR and have them collaborate on the same show.
        b.iv. Have a single student do the above, but for all the areas they want to participate in.
3. Research
    a. This is where you write your design concept. Start with a very brief, 2-3 sentences at most, description of the show. Then go on to talk about the lighting in the show. This should express how you, as the lighting designer, see the show looking. You should tie it into whatever you've discussed with your "director" about the theme of the production. This should include any important visual elements to the show. IE if there is a sunset that is specifically mentioned in the script.
    b. Accompanying your research should be 2-3 images that visualize what you just spoke about in your concept. If you talked about a lot of nice warm oranges and pinks, then you should have pictures that compliment them. Black and white photos are unacceptable unless you can justify it within your concept. If you talk about multiple looks in your concept, you should have 2-3 photos per look.

4. Ground Plan

a. Not to be confused with the light plot. This is a separate document according to the rules. Starting year 2 you need a ground plan AND a light plot.

a.i. Ground plan shows theatre structure and scenic elements.

a.ii. Lighting plot shows only theatre structure that's necessary and has scenic elements drawn lightly underneath the lighting equipment.

5. Lighting Key

a. The purpose of the lighting key is to give you a diving board for which the rest of your design will come from.

a.i. It represents the direction and the color of all the general lighting you are going to put on stage.

a.ii. It should be a simple drawing consisting of a circle in the center, arrows to represent the direction of the incoming light, and a designation by those arrows to denote color.

b. Just remember that for every arrow you put on your lighting key, you will need to represent those lights on the plot. This isn't an issue for first year students, but for second through fourth it is.

c. The lighting key really is a simple document that shouldn't take very long to actually make. The amount of thought that should go into it, however, should be much greater.

6. Rough Plot/Final Plot

a. For the purposes of the competition, you don't need to create a rough plot.

b. Your light plot needs to contain quite a bit of information.

b.i. A title block

b.ii. A reference key

b.iii. A light outline of any relevant theatre architecture.

b.iv. A light outline of the ground plan.

b.v. All lighting positions.

b.vi. All lighting instruments that fulfill the angles and colors as designated in your Lighting Key.

b.vii. Any specials or practicals as needed for your design.

c. Your lighting positions need to all be labeled.

c.i. When numbering positions, start with the closest to the plaster line and move away.

c.ii. 1st electric, 2nd electric, FOH 1, FOH 2, etc.

c.iii. Odd or non-standard positions still need some sort of designation for identification.

c.iii.1. For example, a lighting grid should have all horizontal and all vertical pipes labeled. It can be as simple as horizontal positions being labeled Pipe 1, Pipe 2, and vertical positions being labeled Pipe A, Pipe B.

c.iii.1.a. This is for lighting fixture identification. If I need to find a specific light using only the paperwork, it should be relatively easy. Unit 2 on Pipe B is much easier to find than "The light in the top right of the grid".

d. Each lighting instrument needs the following information on the symbol.

d.i. Channel (Circuit) number

d.ii. Color

d.iii. Focus

d.iv. Unit Number

d.v. Dimmer Number

7. Paperwork

    a. Magic Sheet

        a.i. A magic sheet is a cheat sheet of all of your lighting systems, usually broken up by color and direction. It's a visual representation of where these lights will fall on stage. This is a very visual document. Please refer to the corresponding images on the power point.

            a.i.1. System – A system in lighting is a group of lights that serve the same purpose and have the same color. All of your front light that is R51 would be a system.

    b. Channel Schedule (Hook up)

        b.i. The Channel Schedule is just a spreadsheet of every light on the plot, organized by channel number, with the following information present for each light:

            b.i.1. Channel (Circuit) #

            b.i.2. Dimmer #

            b.i.3. Color

            b.i.4. Gobo

            b.i.5. Focus

            b.i.6. Purpose

            b.i.7. Instrument #

            b.i.8. Instrument Location

            b.i.9. Wattage

            b.i.10. Notes

    c. Cue Sheet

        c.i. The Cue sheet should list all of the cues for the show and should include the following information.

            c.i.1. Cue Number

            c.i.2. Script Page Number

            c.i.3. Cue Description

            c.i.4. Channels affected

            c.i.5. Intensities

            c.i.6. Duration